

Message Text

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10

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DOTE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 AID-20

EUR-25 NIC-01 RSR-01 /147 W
----- 062474

R 101517Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6113

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 9333

E.OWFP11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, IN

SUBJ: LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS STRIKE

REF: (A) NEW DELHI 6410; (B) NEW DELHI 9226

1. DESPITE 8:00 P.M. DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF STRIKE SET BY RAILWAY MINISTER MISHRA, STRIKERS REFUSED TO RETURN TO WORK. MEANWHILE THE UNION LABOR MINISTER RAGHUNATHA REDDY HAD TWO ROUNDS OF TALKS WITH THE ALL-INDIA LOCO RUNNING STAFF ASSOCIATION (AILRSA) REPRESENTATIVES AUGUST 9.

2. WHILE THE RAILWAY BOARD "CLAIMED" 4,000 WORKERS INVOLVED IN STRIKE, AILRSA PRESIDENT SABHAPATI CLAIMS "50,000 OF THE 70,000 LOCOMEN HAD RESORTED TO DIRECT ACTION". OF THE NINE RAILWAYS, ONLY THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN SECTORS ARE UNAFFECTED BY THE STRIKE. SABOTAGE IS REPORTED IN THE NORTHERN RAILWAYS. PRESS REPORTS PUT RS 10 MILLION AS TOTAL LOSS TO RAILWAYS DUE TO STRIKE.

3. MEANWHILE, GOI BEING GENERALLY ATTACKED IN PARLIAMENT BY
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OPPOSITION PARTIES FOR BAD HANDLING OF STRIKE INCLUDING IM-

PRISONMENT OF WORKERS UNDER DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES.

4. RAILWAY MINISTER MISHRA EXPRESSED HIS WILLINGNESS TO MEET THE LOCOMEN FOR DISCUSSIONS BUT REAFFIRMED THAT THEIR DEMANDS WOULD BE CONSIDERED ONLY AFTER WITHDRAWAL OF STRIKE. LEADERS OF AILRSA ARE EXPECTED TO MEET HIM AUGUST 10 EVENING.

5. COMMENT: AN UNSTATED ISSUE WHICH IS CAUSING SERIOUS CONCERN IN THE GOI IS BELIEF THAT BY SUPPORT OF LOCO ENGINEERS CPI IS SEEKING TO ESTABLISH Foothold IN RAILWAYS WHICH IT HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY HELD. THE LEADERS OF THE TWO DOMINANT INDUSTRIAL UNIONS--THE ALL-INDIA RAILWAYMEN'S FEDERATION AND NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDIAN RAILWAYMEN--ARE PRESSING GOI TO AVOID ACTION WHICH WOULD GIVE LOCO ENGINEERS SEPARATE RECOGNITION. THEY HAVE CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT IN GOI FOR VIEW THAT RECOGNITION COULD LEAD TO "BALKANIZATION" OF RAIL UNIONS AND CREATE CONSTANT SOURCE OF UNREST IN THE INDUSTRY.
MOYNIHAN

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Message Attributes

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